Whitehat search engine optimization tips for bloggers

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Misconceptions

- Myth: Google hates some sites

http://www.alexchiu.com/spread.htm
http://alexchiu.com/eternallife/

Plugins I use

- Akismet
- Math Comment Spam Protection
- Google Analytics (put in footer.php)
- Feedburner Feed Replacement: MyBrand + stats
- Democracy (polls)
- SEO Title (swap name <-> title)
  <?php if (is_home()) bloginfo('name'); else wp_title(""); ?>
- Love/hate: WP Cache

Plugins I use

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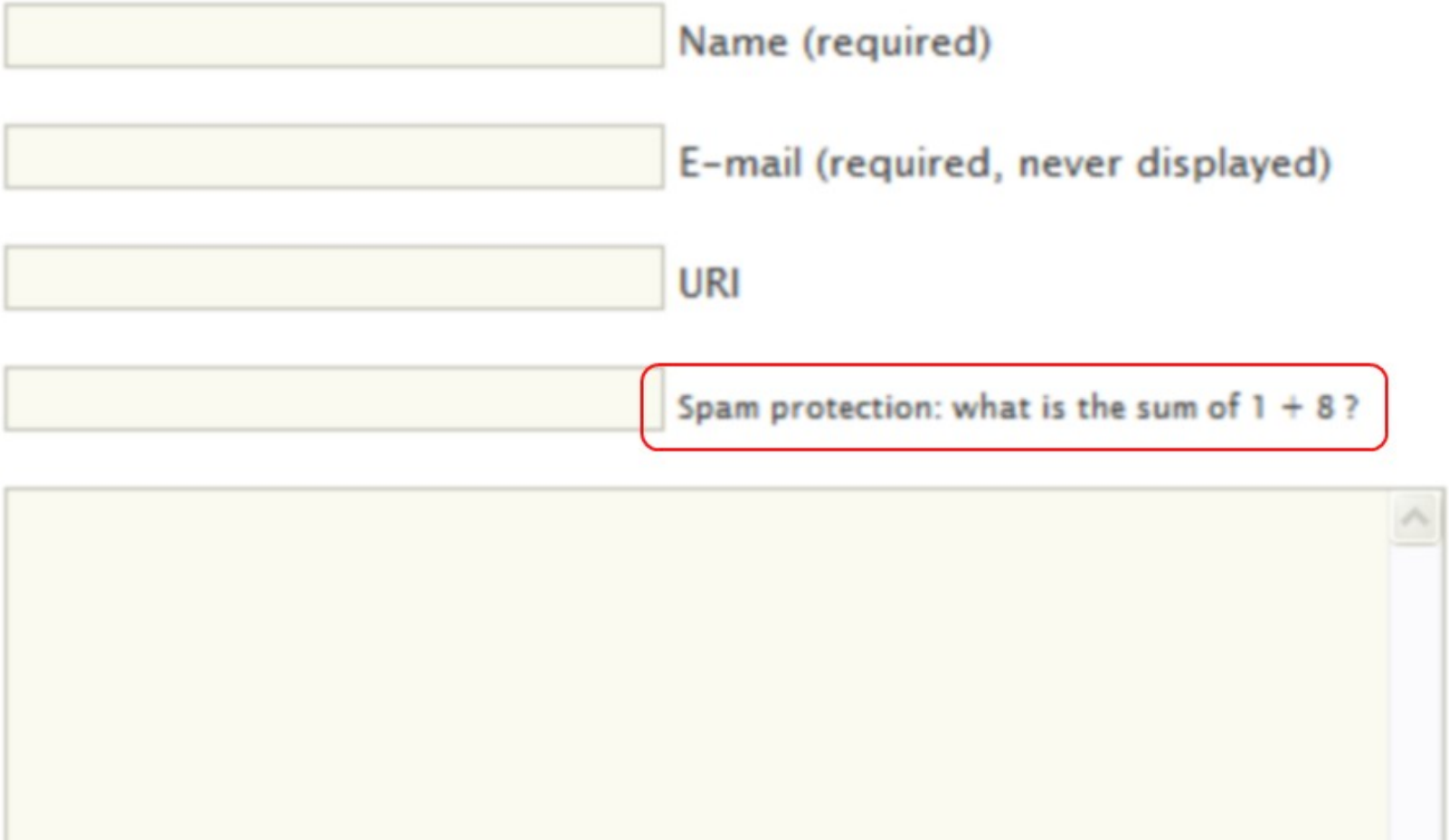
Plugins I use

- Math Comment Spam Protection



Plugins I’m considering

- Brian’s Threaded Comments
- Comment Karma
- Author Highlight
- WWW Redirect
- Permalink Redirect
- Related Entries

SEO tips

- Don't put blog at root page of domain
  - What if you want something besides a blog?
  - People link to main page and main blog page, so you get some extra links that way.
- Name your directory "blog“, not “wordpress”
  - Might want to change your software someday
  - Also makes upgrading easier

SEO tips: keywords

- Various keyword tools: AdWords, Overture/

▲ Keywords	June Search Volume
cat pictures lol	
cats andrew lloyd webber	
cats the musical	
for sale cats	
funny pics cats	
funny pictures cats	
laugh out loud lol	
lol cat	
lol cat pics	
lol cats	
lol cats com	
lol d cat	
lol equals cats	
lol funny pics	
lol funny pictures	
lol kitten	
lol kittens	

SEO tips: keywords

- Use categories that are also good keywords
- Keywords in url paths: domain.com/my-words
  - Dashes are best
  - Next best is underscores
  - No spaces is worst
- Someone should ask me: What if I’ve already done my site? Should I change?

SEO tips: keywords

- Think about the keywords that users will type. Include them naturally in your posts
- ALT tags are handy (3-4 relevant words)
- Don't forget image search, videos, etc.

http://mc.com/blog/change-default-printer-linux-firefox/

url path: /change-default-printer-linux-firefox/

title: Changing the default printer on Linux and Firefox

SEO tips: Usability

- Make sure your site is crawlable
- Make your post creation dates easy to find
- Check your blog on a cell phone/iPhone
- I recommend full-text RSS feeds to get loyal users. Partial feeds get more page views, but not as much love.
- Your blog should do standard pings

SEO tips: moving to a new webhost

How to switch from one IP address to another

1. (Optional) Reduce your DNS time-to-live
2. Back up your site. Bring it up on new IP
3. Watch Googlebot & user traffic until they fetch the site from the new IP address
4. Take down the old site

SEO tips: moving to a new domain

- Standard advice: Use a 301 (permanent) redirect

- Even better: pick one subdirectory and move it first
- If the traffic stays roughly the same on the desired domain, go ahead and switch
- Otherwise, take some time to figure out why
- Standardize your backlinks (www vs. non-www)
- Write to everyone; ask them to update their links

SEO tips: free Google tools

- Webmaster console
- Feedburner: MyBrand for free
  - feeds.mattcutts.com instead of feeds.feedburner.com
- Custom Search Engine: free site search
- AdSense

  <!-- google_ad_section_start -->

  <!-- google_ad_section_end -->
- Google Analytics

Google Analytics

Traffic Sources Overview

Jul 12, 2007 - Jul 13, 2007

Export | Email | Add to Dashboard

All traffic sources sent a total of 41,323 visits

10.86% Direct Traffic

79.45% Referring Sites

9.69% Search Engines

All Traffic Sources

- Referring Sites
  32,831 (79.45%)
- Direct Traffic
  4,486 (10.86%)
- Search Engines
  4,005 (9.69%)
- Other
  1 (> 0.00%)

SEO tips: Webmaster console

http://www.google.com/webmasters/

- Test out robots.txt before pushing live
- Submit an authenticated spam report
- Url removal tool: remove urls/directories for 6 months

- See your backlinks (helps moving to a new domain)
- See 404 and crawl errors
- See crawl stats
- Decide www vs. non-www

Backlinks

Pages with external links [?]

This table provides a list of pages on http://www.mattcutts.com/ that have links pointing to them from other sites. Click the number in the External links column to see a sample list of links to the page. See Internal links for internal links and links from subdomains.

1 to 30 of 599 Next ›

Find a page Items per page: 30

Pages	External links
All pages (total links)	186252
http://www.mattcutts.com/	5776
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/	96364
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/a-quick-puzzle	76
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/company-blogging-101	182
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/dashes-vs-underscores	19
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/disclaimer	39
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/feedback-products	4
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/funny-article	11

404s and crawl errors

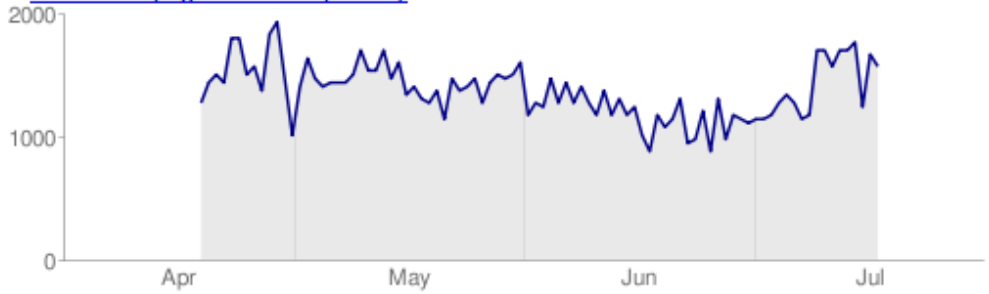
Errors **1** to **35** of about **35**

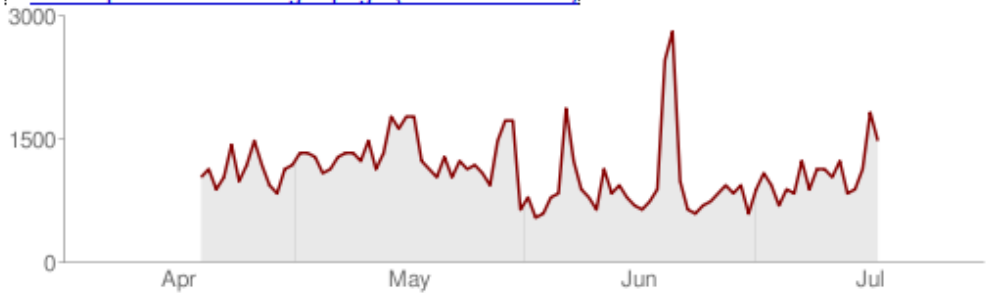
URL	Detail	Last Calculated
http://www.mattcutts.com/BLOG	404 (Not found) [?]	Jul 12, 2007
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog)	404 (Not found) [?]	Jul 8, 2007
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/%20Matt%20Cutts	404 (Not found) [?]	Jul 12, 2007
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/%20Matt%20Cutts%20Blog	404 (Not found) [?]	Jul 19, 2007
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/%20target=	404 (Not found) [?]	Jul 18, 2007
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/%20title=	404 (Not found) [?]	Jul 9, 2007
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/%3Ca%20href=	404 (Not found) [?]	Jul 13, 2007
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/)	404 (Not found) [?]	Jul 18, 2007
http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/*	404 (Not found) [?]	Jul 6, 2007

See crawl stats

Googlebot activity in the last 90 days [?]

	Maximum	Average	Minimum
Number of pages crawled per day	1952	1392	898
Number of kilobytes downloaded per day	246491	104735	30798
Time spent downloading a page (in milliseconds)	2844	1136	562





http://google.com/webmasters/

Preferred domain [?]

If www.mattcutts.com and mattcutts.com point to the same site, you can tell us here how you want URLs to display in our index.

- ○ Display URLs as **www.mattcutts.com** (for both www.mattcutts.com and mattcutts.com)
- ○ Display URLs as **mattcutts.com** (for both www.mattcutts.com and mattcutts.com)
- ◉ Don't set an association.

OK

Note: Once you specify your preference here, it may take some time for changes to be reflected in our index. While Google doesn't guarantee that we'll show your URLs in the form that you prefer, we will use your choice as a suggestion to improve our indexing.

SEO tips: Ranking advice

“Get traffic from Google, then get noticed”

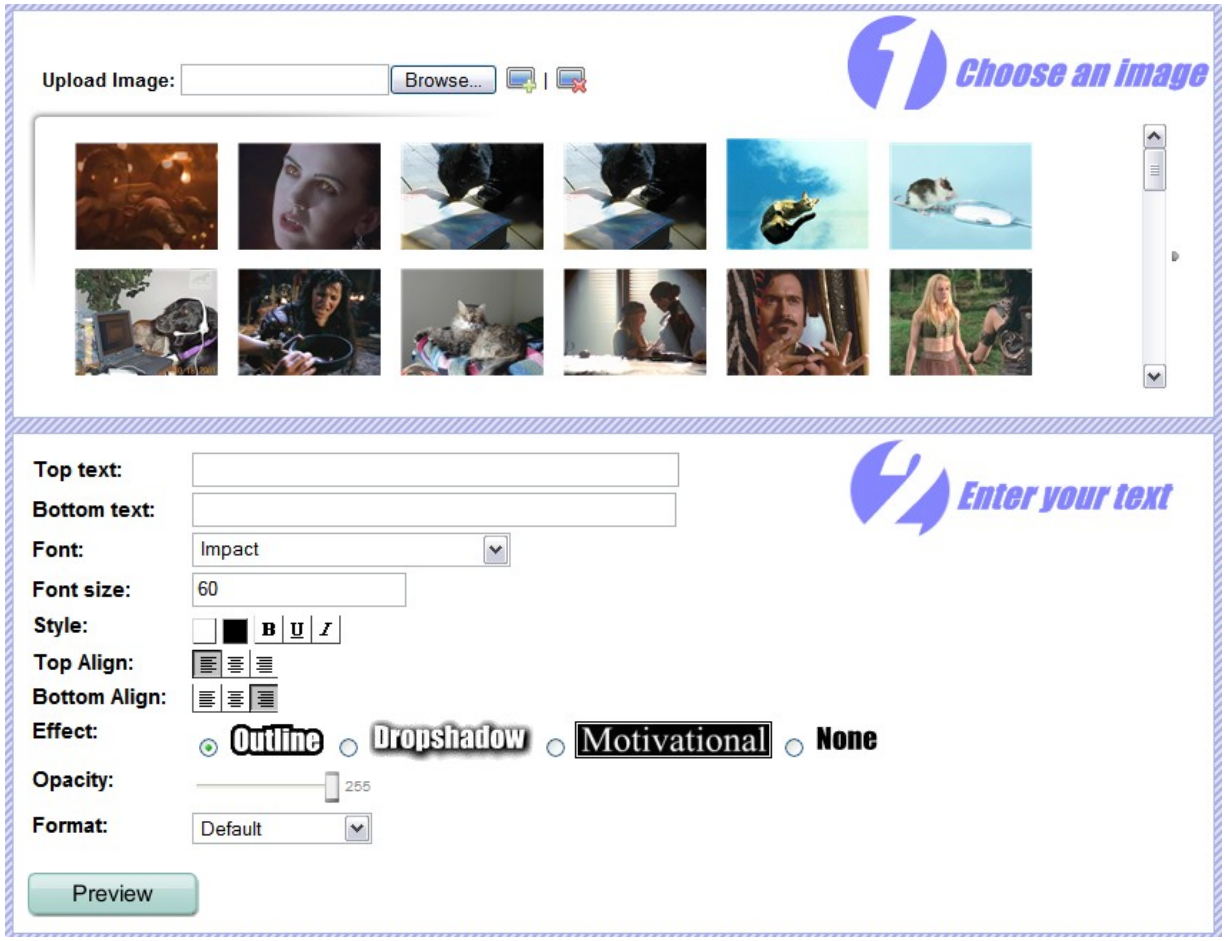
OR

“Get noticed, then get traffic from Google”

?

SEO tips: getting known

- Provide useful service
  - Sign creator that produces PDF
  - iPhone apps
  - Lolcat builde



SEO tips: getting known

- Creativity creates buzz/word-of-mouth
  - Lonelygirl15
  - Million pixel home page
  - Humor: Mac vs. PC
  - Free hugs campaign
  - Photoshopping, e.g. Perez Hilton
  - Analyze someone else's blog
  - Sell your moustache on eBay
  - "Say Google fast"
  - David Klein (here today) is taking pictures at http://www.bodyabcs.com/camp/

SEO tips: getting known

- Tutorials (Firefox, Linux, Ubuntu, fashion, …)
- Contribute insightful analysis
  - Less spam with Gmail, Yahoo, or Hotmail?
  - Hunting down Wikipedia defacers
  - Other topics? Watch Techmeme, Reddit, Digg, Slashdot
- Live blogging
- Create controversy
  - John Dvorak: Master of creating controversy
  - Mention Robert Scoble
  - George Bush poll
- Make lists: “13 reasons why something rulez/sux0r”

SEO tips: avoid mistakes

- Change default permalink (domain.com/?p=111)
- I use /%postname%/
- Don't use sponsored theme - can lose all your trust in different search engines
- No PayPerPost on wordpress.com: TOS highlights that in blue

SEO tips: security

Put .htaccess in /wp-admin/ (not in your root directory!)

```
AuthUserFile /dev/null
AuthGroupFile /dev/null
AuthName "Access Control"
AuthType Basic
<LIMIT GET>
order deny,allow
deny from all
# whitelist home IP address
allow from 123.45.67.89
# whitelist work IP address
allow from 89.67.45.123
</LIMIT>
```

http://www.reubenyau.com/protecting-the-wordpress-wp-admin-folder/

My WordPress Wishlist

- Drop RSS 0.92 feed
- Prevent content at multiple url aliases
- Better caching without WP Cache
- Drop version string in header.php
- Put a blank index.html in /plugins/ directory. When a plugin has a security hole, it’s easy to see who to hack
- Protect /wp-admin/ more

Blogger SEO tips: More reading

- http://googlewebmastercentral.blogspot.com/
- http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/ (SEO)
- http://www.stephanspencer.com/tag/blog-optimization (blogs)
- http://www.downloadsquad.com/2007/01/15/wordpress-the-complete-post-install-checklist/